

Remarks

Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. The Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's helpful comments with respect to Claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 19 and 20.

The Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 2 to reinsert the previously cancelled portions of paragraph (D) for clarification purposes. Claims 1 and 2 have also been amended to correct a minor typographical error. The Applicants accordingly respectfully submit that Claims 1 and 2 are now in conformance with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Withdrawal of that portion of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 9, 10, 19 and 20 have been cancelled, thereby rendering that portion of the rejection moot. The Applicants therefore respectfully submit that all of the remaining claims are now in conformance with §112 and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by or under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious over Nakajima. The Applicants note with appreciation helpful comments hypothetically applying Nakajima against the claims. The Applicants nonetheless respectfully submit that Nakajima fails to anticipate and fails to render obvious Claims 1-8, 11-18 and 21-22. Reasons are set forth below.

The Applicants first note that the range of the number average molecular weight has been amended to have a lower limit of 25,000 from the prior 22,000 limit. This amendment is inherently supported by virtue of the fact that the new lower limit of 25,000 is within the original and broader 22,000 number. Also, direct support may be found on page 10 of the Applicants' specification on line 35.

This number average molecular weight removes the claimed subject matter from Nakajima both under §§102 and 103. For example, referring to the unsaturated carboxylic acid-modified

copolymer of C-i in Comparative Example 2 of Nakajima, it can be seen that there is a reduced viscosity of 0.65. This may be found in lines 19-24 of column 7 of Nakajima. The reduced viscosity of 0.65 corresponds to a number average molecular weight of 24,000. The Applicants note that such a number average molecular weight of 24,000, which is the maximum disclosed by Nakajima, is outside of the Applicants' claimed range of 25,000 to 60,000. Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are not anticipated by Nakajima. Withdrawal of that portion of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Applicants respectfully submit that the solicited claims are also not obvious over Nakajima. In that regard, it can be seen by reference to the Applicants' examples that the claimed range of 25,000 to 60,000 provides for excellent chemical resistance. Chemical resistance is not taught, disclosed or even suggested in Nakajima. This is a problem because this makes Nakajima non-enabling with respect to achieving the Applicants' excellent chemical resistance characteristics. Since Nakajima does not mention chemical resistance, Nakajima inherently fails to provide teachings or guidance to those skilled in the art as to how to achieve such excellent chemical resistance. The Applicants have discovered that utilizing the number average molecular weight of 25,000 to 60,000 provides such excellent results. Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are not obvious over Nakajima.

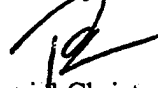
There is a further difference in that the number average molecular weight of the acetone-soluble moiety of the graft polymer (B) is within the range of 20,000 to 100,000. This range also improves the chemical resistance of the composition while maintaining impact strength, fluidity and paintability without deterioration. This is shown in Table 1 of Example 1.

The thermoplastic resin composition as claimed comprises component (B) having the specific acetone-soluble moiety with a number average molecular weight of 20,000 to 100,000 and

component (C) having the number average molecular weight of 25,000 to 60,000 which is, in combination, responsible for particularly excellent chemical resistance characteristics while simultaneously maintaining impact strength, fluidity and paintability. This is not disclosed, not taught and not suggested in Nakajima. The Applicants therefore believe that all of the solicited claims distinguish over Nakajima. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Applicants respectfully submit that the above amendments and arguments do not raise new issues or cause the need for additional searching inasmuch as they directly address issues raised in the Official Action, reduce the number of issues for appeal and do not claim subject matter that was not previously claimed. Moreover, the number of claims has been reduced. Thus, the Applicants respectfully request that all of the above amendments be entered into the official file and considered on the merits. Also, in view of the above compelling arguments distinguishing over Nakajima, the Applicants respectfully submit that the entire application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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